RELATIONSHIPS SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY

Holy Trinity and St John's Church of England Primary School

Vision

Rooted in the love of Christ, we nurture every child to flourish with courage, compassion and community - becoming a light for others in the world.

Effective from: September 2026

Review date: September 2027

Policy leads: Headteacher and PSHE / RSHE Lead

Approved by: Governing Body

1. Our Vision and Aims

At Holy Trinity and St John's Church of England Primary School, Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is rooted in our Christian vision and values. We want every child to understand that they are valued, to treat others with love and respect, and to develop the knowledge, language and confidence needed to build safe, healthy relationships and make responsible choices.

Our teaching recognises the importance of marriage, committed relationships and stable family life, while reflecting sensitively that families take many forms. We teach pupils to value care, honesty, trust, forgiveness and responsibility, and to respect people whose experiences, beliefs or family circumstances differ from their own.

RSHE helps pupils develop self-respect, confidence, empathy and resilience. It prepares them for the physical and emotional changes of growing up, supports their mental and physical health, teaches them how to recognise unsafe or harmful situations, and makes sure they know how and where to seek help. Teaching is factual, age-appropriate, inclusive and firmly connected to safeguarding.

2. Statutory Framework

This policy has regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education that applies from 1 September 2026. It also reflects the Children and Social Work Act 2017, sections 403 to 407 of the Education Act 1996, the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, the National Curriculum for Science, and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

The school must provide Relationships Education and Health Education to all primary pupils. It must also teach the relevant biological content within the National Curriculum for Science. Primary schools are not required to teach Sex Education beyond Science, but may provide additional age-appropriate Sex Education where this meets pupils' needs. At Holy Trinity and St John's, the different elements are identified clearly so that pupils, parents and staff understand what is statutory and what forms part of the school's additional provision.

3. What RSHE Means in Our School

3.1 Statutory Relationships Education

Relationships Education teaches the knowledge and skills that form the foundations of positive relationships. Pupils learn about families and people who care for them, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe. They learn how to recognise kindness and respect, communicate boundaries, resolve disagreements, identify unhealthy or unsafe behaviour and seek help from trusted adults.

3.2 Statutory Health Education

Health Education supports pupils' physical health and mental wellbeing. It includes mental wellbeing, online wellbeing, physical health and fitness, healthy eating, drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping, health protection and prevention, basic first aid, personal safety and the changing adolescent body. Puberty and menstrual health are taught before pupils are likely to experience these changes.

3.3 Statutory Science

The Science curriculum includes naming external body parts, life cycles, growth from birth to old age, reproduction in some plants and animals, and the changes associated with puberty. This statutory Science content is taught to all pupils and is not subject to parental withdrawal.

3.4 Additional Primary Sex Education

In Year 6, the school provides a limited programme of additional primary Sex Education to help pupils understand how a baby is conceived and born. This is taught factually and sensitively, in the context of loving, stable and responsible adult relationships and family life. Teaching may include a simple explanation that adults can make responsible choices to prevent pregnancy, but it does not provide detailed instruction about obtaining or using contraception. This additional content is identified in advance for parents and is the only part of the planned curriculum from which a parent or carer may withdraw their child.

4. Curriculum and Progression

RSHE is taught as a carefully sequenced programme from Reception to Year 6. The school's curriculum map identifies where each statutory outcome is introduced, revisited and secured, and distinguishes Relationships Education, Health Education, Science and additional Sex Education. The map is reviewed against the statutory end points and adapted when pupils' needs or national requirements change.

Learning begins with familiar ideas such as family, friendship, feelings, personal hygiene, privacy and trusted adults. As pupils mature, teaching develops their understanding of commitment, respectful behaviour, online relationships, boundaries, consent, puberty, mental wellbeing, personal safety and help-seeking. The curriculum builds knowledge gradually and avoids presenting protective content in a way that causes unnecessary alarm or appears to normalise risky behaviour.

Kapow Primary provides the core scheme and curriculum content for PSHE and RSHE from Reception to Year 6. Teachers use its carefully sequenced lessons and resources as the main framework, adapting and supplementing them where necessary to meet the statutory RSHE outcomes, the needs of pupils and the school's Christian vision and local context. RSHE is taught mainly through PSHE lessons, with relevant biological content taught through Science and related learning reinforced through Religious Education, computing, physical education, English, collective worship and wider personal development. These connections support learning but do not replace the planned and progressive RSHE programme.

5. Teaching and Learning

Class teachers usually deliver RSHE because they know their pupils well. Lessons use clear learning intentions, accurate vocabulary and carefully selected resources. Teaching may include stories, diagrams, discussion, scenarios, role play, practical activities and anonymous question boxes. Pupils' understanding is checked through discussion, reflection, classroom tasks and age-appropriate assessment rather than formal examinations.

A safe learning environment is established through ground rules. Pupils are expected to listen respectfully, avoid personal comments and understand that no one should be pressured to share private experiences. Teachers use distancing techniques, fictional examples and general discussion so that sensitive issues can be explored without exposing a pupil's personal or family circumstances.

Correct terminology for body parts is taught in an age-appropriate way because it supports health, communication and safeguarding. Teaching is balanced and evidence-based. Staff will not promote personal beliefs as fact, seek to persuade pupils towards a particular lifestyle, or use materials that reinforce harmful stereotypes.

6. Questions, Confidentiality and Disclosures

Pupils' questions will be answered honestly, sensitively and at a level appropriate to their age and development. Questions that are relevant to the planned learning will normally be answered for the class. A question beyond the planned curriculum may be answered individually, deferred while advice is sought, or referred to the pupil's parent or carer where appropriate. Pupils will not be directed to search online for answers to sensitive questions.

Staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality. At the beginning of sensitive teaching, pupils will be reminded that an adult must share information if they are concerned that a child or another person may be at risk of harm. Where possible, the pupil will be told what will happen next and supported throughout. Any question, comment or disclosure that raises a safeguarding concern will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the school's child protection and safeguarding policy.

7. Safeguarding, Online Safety and Harmful Behaviour

RSHE is an important part of the school's preventative safeguarding work. Pupils learn how to recognise safe and unsafe relationships, understand privacy and personal boundaries, respond to pressure or coercion, judge whether a person or source of information is trustworthy, and seek help for themselves or someone else. Sexual harassment, sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviour are never acceptable and are never the fault of the person who experiences them.

Age-appropriate teaching addresses online relationships, sharing personal information and images, grooming, manipulation, bullying, harassment, pressure and coercion. Pupils learn that images and messages can be copied or altered, including through artificial intelligence and deepfakes, and that some online content promotes misogyny, violence, harmful attitudes or unrealistic expectations. They are taught how to report concerns, block or leave unsafe contact, preserve evidence where appropriate and ask a trusted adult for help.

Staff challenge sexualised language, misogynistic or degrading comments, homophobic or discriminatory language and behaviour that normalises harassment or abuse. Concerns are addressed through the behaviour and safeguarding procedures, with the response based on the child's age, understanding, vulnerability and the impact on others.

8. Equality, Inclusion and Protected Characteristics

RSHE is an entitlement for every pupil. Teaching is planned in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, with due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. Pupils learn, at an age-appropriate level and in the context of the wider curriculum, that people may share or differ in relation to protected characteristics and that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect.

The curriculum reflects different family structures, including single-parent families, families with same-sex parents, adoptive and foster families, families headed by grandparents and kinship carers. No child is expected to speak on behalf of a family, faith, culture or group. Teaching about marriage and committed relationships is presented alongside respect for the varied circumstances in which children live.

The school teaches factual, age-appropriate information and does not reinforce gender stereotypes. Pupils are taught to respect biological differences and to understand that the Equality Act protects people from discrimination, including people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. Staff will not present contested beliefs as undisputed fact or suggest that stereotypes determine how a child should feel, behave or identify.

9. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Teaching is adapted and personalised so that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities can understand and apply the learning. Staff consider communication needs, cognitive understanding, sensory needs, emotional development and vulnerability. Content may be revisited, broken into smaller steps, supported visually or taught in a smaller group or individual context where this is in the pupil's best interests.

Adaptation will not remove a pupil's entitlement to protective knowledge. Pupils with SEND may be particularly vulnerable to exploitation, misunderstanding of social situations or difficulty communicating concerns, so teaching gives explicit attention to boundaries, consent, private and public behaviour, trusted adults and ways of seeking help.

10. Puberty and Menstrual Health

Puberty is taught through statutory Health Education and Science, with planned teaching in upper Key Stage 2 and earlier preparation where appropriate. All pupils learn about the main physical and emotional changes experienced by males and females. Teaching is inclusive and ensures that boys and girls understand menstruation and other aspects of puberty rather than treating them as relevant to only one group.

Pupils receive practical information about managing periods and knowing when to seek help for health concerns. The school provides discreet access to period products and suitable disposal facilities. Staff respond to requests sensitively and without embarrassment. Where single-sex teaching is used for a particular activity, pupils also receive the shared core knowledge and have opportunities to ask questions safely.

11. Working With Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are the first educators of their children, and the school values a respectful partnership with them. The school publishes this policy and provides clear information about curriculum content, timing and any additional Sex Education. Parents and carers may ask to see all RSHE curriculum materials, including materials provided by an external organisation, subject to reasonable arrangements that protect copyright.

The school consults parents and carers when developing or reviewing the RSHE policy and significant curriculum changes. A representative range of proposed materials will be made available during consultation. Parents' views will be listened to carefully, but individual parents do not have a veto over statutory curriculum content or the school's responsibility to meet legal duties. Concerns should normally be raised first with the class teacher or PSHE / RSHE Lead and may then be considered through the school's complaints procedure.

12. The Right to Withdraw

Parents and carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from statutory Relationships Education, statutory Health Education or any content taught through the National Curriculum for Science, including puberty and the statutory biological content.

A parent or carer may withdraw their child only from the additional primary Sex Education described in section 3.4. Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will invite the parent or carer to discuss the content, the purpose of the teaching and any concerns, but will grant the request. A pupil who is withdrawn will receive appropriate alternative education and will not be disadvantaged or stigmatised. The request and agreed arrangements will be recorded.

13. Resources and External Organisations

Kapow Primary is the school's principal source of planned PSHE and RSHE curriculum materials. Its lessons and resources are reviewed and adapted by the PSHE / RSHE Lead and class teachers, rather than used without professional judgement. Kapow Primary and any supplementary resources are selected because they are accurate, evidence-based, age-appropriate, accessible and consistent with this policy, the statutory guidance and the school's Christian ethos. The PSHE / RSHE Lead and class teacher consider the source, language, images, balance, potential impact on vulnerable pupils, and whether a resource supports the intended learning. Materials that stereotype, sensationalise, distress unnecessarily or promote a commercial or political viewpoint will not be used.

External visitors may enhance the curriculum but do not replace teaching by school staff. The school remains responsible for all content and delivery. Before a visit, staff will check the organisation and named speakers, review lesson plans and resources, confirm safeguarding and confidentiality arrangements, ensure political impartiality, and make clear that materials must be available to parents

on request. A teacher will remain present and may intervene or stop a session if it departs from the agreed plan or this policy.

14. Roles and Responsibilities

14.1 Governing Body

The Governing Body approves this policy, holds the Headteacher to account for its implementation and ensures that statutory content is taught, teaching is accessible to pupils with SEND, materials align with guidance, and parents receive clear information about the curriculum and withdrawal rights.

14.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher ensures consistent implementation, appropriate staffing and training, access to materials for parents, compliance with safeguarding and equality duties, and the fair management of withdrawal requests and complaints.

14.3 PSHE and RSHE Lead

The PSHE / RSHE Lead maintains the curriculum map, supports planning and resources, advises staff on sensitive questions, monitors teaching and pupil progress, coordinates consultation and keeps the policy and curriculum aligned with statutory requirements.

14.4 Staff

Staff deliver RSHE sensitively and accurately, model respectful relationships, adapt teaching to pupils' needs, challenge harmful language and stereotypes, assess learning and report safeguarding concerns. Staff do not have a right to opt out of teaching RSHE; any concern about delivery should be discussed with the Headteacher.

14.5 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage with learning, follow agreed ground rules and treat the questions, experiences and identities of others with respect and sensitivity.

15. Staff Training

RSHE is included in staff induction and continuing professional development. Training addresses statutory content, subject knowledge, inclusive teaching, age-appropriate language, responding to questions, online harms, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour, confidentiality and safeguarding disclosures. The school may seek support from suitable health or safeguarding professionals where specialist knowledge is required.

16. Assessment, Monitoring and Review

Class teachers assess pupils' developing knowledge and understanding through ordinary classroom practice. Assessment is used to identify misconceptions, inform future teaching and ensure that pupils who need additional explanation or support receive it. Pupils are also given age-appropriate opportunities to reflect on learning and contribute to evaluation of the programme.

The PSHE / RSHE Lead monitors provision through curriculum planning, discussion with staff and pupils, scrutiny of learning and other proportionate quality-assurance activity. The Headteacher reports relevant findings to the Governing Body. This policy is reviewed annually, and earlier if statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements or the needs of the school community change. Parents, staff and pupils will be consulted as appropriate during review.

17. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside the child protection and safeguarding policy, online safety policy, behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy, equality policy, SEND policy, Science curriculum, data-protection policy, complaints policy, staff code of conduct and acceptable-use agreements. Where a concern or incident arises, the detailed reporting and response procedures in those policies will be followed.

18. Our Commitment

Holy Trinity and St John's Church of England Primary School will provide RSHE that is faithful to our Christian character, legally compliant, factually accurate and responsive to the needs of our pupils. We will work openly with families, protect every child's dignity and safety, and give pupils the knowledge and confidence they need to flourish and become a light for others in the world.